

[17 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

- (c) what action has been taken in this regard so far;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (e) Medicines-drugs are procured by ESI Hospitals either directly or through the Central Stores on the basis of the Centralised Rate Contract formulated by the ESI Corporation. In the case of nonavailability of drugs on the ESIC Rate contracts, drugs/medicines are also purchased through the Rate Contract of DGS&D/State Government, Central Government etc. There are stringent eligibility criteria for supply of medicines in ESI hospitals and pharmaceutical firms can be debarred for a period of three years from participation in the ESI Rate Contract in case of supply of sub-standard/inferior quality drugs/medicines.

Indian Housemaids in Gulf Countries

2728. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government consider to constitute a data bank relating to the details of Indian housemaids working in Gulf countries;
- (b) whether Government are aware that the housemaids recruited from Kerala are subjected to severe harassment in Gulf countries; and
- (c) whether Government propose to take adequate measures even to labour legislation so as to ensure their safety and improve their working conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) The house-maids intending to emigrate to the gulf countries for contractual employment are allowed emigration clearance only if the employment documents are attested by the Indian Missions abroad.

After the emigration clearance has been granted, details of these housemaids, along with the names and addresses of the employers are made available to the Indian Missions. There is no proposal to constitute a data bank for this purpose. Sporadic complaints of ill-treatment of housemaids by the foreign employers are received by the Government. These complaints are brought to the notice of the Indian Missions which try to redress the grievances of the housemaids in consultation with the concerned employers and authorities. Simultaneously, the recruiting agents are also advised to approach the sponsors for redressing the grievances of the housemaids. Majority of the grievances are redressed in this manner. In the event of the recruiting agents not cooperating in the matter, action is taken to suspend/cancel their registration certificates.

Number of Agricultural workers in Bihar

2729. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of agricultural workers male, female and children in Bihar as on date, category-wise;

(b) what facilities are being extended to them by the Central and State Governments for their Welfare; and

(c) what action Government have taken to ensure that minimum wages are paid to the agricultural workers of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) According to 1991 Census, the total number of agricultural workers in Bihar is 95,44,444, out of which 70,48,051 are male and 24,96,393 are female. Separate data regarding child farm workers is not maintained.

(b) The Government is implementing a number of schemes for the welfare of rural workers including agricultural labour in the country like Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojna (SGSY) which has been launched from April, 1999 by amalgamating certain earlier